UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Production and Marketing Administration
NEW MEXICO State College, New Mexico 2-6-48
No. 280

WEEKLY FARM PROGRAM NEWS

COMMUNITY COMMITTEEMEN HELP IN CONSERVATION PLANS - One of the most important jobs of farmer-elected community agricultural conservation committeemen is to help their neighbors with their soil and water conservation plans for the year, says _____, Chairman of the _____County Agricultural Conservation Committee.

The Agricultural Conservation Program and the legislation under which the program is authorized was designed to give farmers through their elected committeemen a voice in the administration of the conservation program.

The chairman points out that by sitting down with individual farmers and going over the conservation problems on their farms with them, community committeemen are in a strong position to make the program increasingly effective. The effectiveness of the nation's conservation effort depends largely on getting program information to farmers. Program information comes down from county committees by way of state committees, technical committees, Land-Grant Colleges, Extension Services, and Experiment Stations. Thus the community committeeman is the key link in the program chain that leads to the farmer.

While much of the responsibility of administering the ACProgram in the county rests with the county committee, the chairman explains, the community committeemen "are out on the firing line — so to speak — and in that position are the grass roots contacts with farmers."

Community committeemen in _____ county, as elected by their neighbors last fall, are listed by communities as follows:

(Note: List community committees by communities.)

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OVERDRAFT FROM THE SOIL BANK - Did you ever get an "OD" from your bank? asks C. V. Hemphill, Chairman of the New Mexico PMA Committee, — I mean your soil bank?

He pointed out that we are running through our bank account of soil altogether too fast. Half the cropland we used in the United States last year was subject to erosion in greater or less degree. After more than 10 years of widespread application of soil building materials and soil-saving practices, there still is need to step up the operation.

The chairman discusses the problem in banking terms. "Almost like when a rich uncle dies and leaves us a bank account, the people of the United States and the early settlers of America found a virgin soil rich in minerals and humus. But the Nation has run through about a third of the original account already and the balance is dwindling fast.

"And, the family depending on the account is getting larger. There are more mouths to feed and more stomachs to fill. Our bank account is going down while the need is increasing.

"Like any bank account, a system is needed that balances outgo with income and provides for restoring previous withdrawals. Only in this way can the nation avoid an 'OD' from the soil bank. That, in banking terms, is the function of the Agricultural Conservation Program.

"Everyone who eats, has an interest in the soil bank account. Everyone has a responsibility in helping keep the account from running out. If that responsibility is not met, everyone will eventually be eating less with a greater comparative cost. The 'OD' affects the whole family not just the farmer who produces the bread and butter and beans and beef."

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SAVE WATER—SAVE SOIL - Soil and water go together. This is not the beginning of a story on irrigation, says _____, chairman of the _____County Agricultural Conservation Committee, but the story of the erosion that is eating away our security. If the water leaving the land in a rain storm or when the snow melts can be checked, the amount of land lost will be cut down.

The water, he explains, is needed to grow the plants which keep the water

from running off. When there is little vegetation and when drill rows and plow furrows are up and down the slope, there is little to hold the rain that falls or the snow that melts. It runs off and it takes the topsoil with it.

When there is a cover of growing plants, the rain drops are broken up and the roots of the plants lead the water down into the soil where it helps to keep the vegetation growing. Rain falling directly on unprotected land churns up the topsoil and soon a muddy stream is cuttin its way down the slope.

Soil and water go together. Both are needed for growing plants, but every time they leave the field together they leave it that much poorer...that much less able to produce the needed food.

On the other hand, soil and water can be made to stay together. The water held back helps grow the crops that help hold the soil. To do this more vegetative cover is needed to protect the land. This means winter cover where the land is not frozen. It means terraces, grassed waterways, farming on the contour, pastures and short rotations with grass and legumes in the rotation, and dams where necessary.

By holding our land we hold our future security as a nation, the chairman said. To do that is the aim and purpose of the Agricultural Conservation Program.

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ERP MEANS MORE CONSERVATION IN FUTURE, SAYS SECRETARY - The chief unfavorable aspect of the European Relief Program on U. S. agriculture will be a delay in reducing grain acreage to more desirable levels, Secretary of Agriculture Clinton P. Anderson recently told a Congressional committee.

"It will necessitate increasing conservation efforts if we are to prevent further reduction in our soil resources," the Secretary added.

Commenting on the importance to the U. S. farmer of healthy, stable customers for our products in Western Europe, Secretary Anderson pointed out that Western Europe is the world's biggest market for food exports. Since the turn of the century from 60 to 75 percent of our food exports have gone to those nations;

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unless the economy of the area can be restored to a strong, self-supporting basis, the producers of our export crops will suffer directly, and all our farmers will suffer indirectly.

Intended exports of food under the relief program can be furnished by the U. S. without adding any extra strain on either our food supplies or on food prices, the Secretary said. This statement was given about the major food items involved in the program which are now in tight supply in this country:

Grain exports would call for continued acreages of wheat and corn at approximately the present levels. Wheat exports are proceeding at a planned rate of 450 million bushels, but, if present conservation efforts are successful, exports might run as high as 500 million bushels. Estimated exports of wheat for the next 2 years would drop down to 300 million bushels. For the last 2 years of the relief program, wheat shipments would drop to 250 million bushels, and wheat acreage could gradually be reduced to more desirable levels. Relief exports of feed grains are estimated at about 100 million bushels each year, about half of which is expected to be corn.

Meat exports planned from this country to Western Europe during the first 2 years of the European Relief Program do not include any of the types which this country consumes. Meat exports during the last 2 years would depend on the situation at that time.

No sugar exports are planned, but world supplies should be adequate to meet the needs of the participating countries. Some fats and oils are planned for export, but they are more than offset by Philippine copra and other forms of oil which the U. S. will import.

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USDA ASKS FUMIGATION OF FARM-STORED GRAINS - With warm weather around the corner and large stocks of grain still in farm bins, farmers should take steps now to control stored-grain insect pests, said the U. S. Department of Agriculture today in announcing publication of a farm fact sheet,"Save Farm Grain by Fumigation".

"Insects living in farm grain bins eat or destroy five percent or more of our Nation's stored grains and cereal products every year" the Department pointed out. "They cause an annual loss estimated at 300 million bushels of grain. . . . That terrific loss is being carried principally by you farmers."

The importance of protecting farm-stored grain from insects is shown in the findings of the U. S. Crop Reporting Board. As of January 1, 1948, a total of 428 million bushels of wheat was on farms, twenty-five percent more than a year ago and considerably more than most years.

The fact sheet material was prepared by the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine. The recommendations are advanced as an important step that practically every farmer can take to help stretch today's limited supplies of food and feed.

The fact sheet recommends that farmers should (1) investigate to see if there are any insects in their grain, and (2) if insects are present, fumigate the grain with a mixture of three parts by volume of ethylene dichloride and one part of carbon tetrachloride. This fumigant should be purchased ready-mixed. It will not hurt grain for use as food, feed, or seed. The fumigant's vapors are poisonous and extreme care must be used so as not to inhale them, the fact sheet warns.

As a year-round means of controlling insect damage, the entomoligists recommend to farmers this eight point program:

"Thoroughly clean your empty bins before refilling them with new grain.

"Clean up outside your bins, also.

"Don't keep bran, shorts, and other milled feed or empty feed bags near your stored grains. Often they contain insects brought in from the mill.

"Before refilling your empty storage bins, spray the floors and inside walls with an oil solution or water suspension containing five percent or less of DDT.

"Have your grain as dry as possible when you store it.

"Have it free as possible from broken kernels and dirt.

"Build bins and cribs tight, to make fumigation easier.

"Stored grain should be inspected at least once a month. If evidence of insect damage shows up, fumigate as soon as possible."

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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State College, New Mexico

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WEEKLY FARM PROGRAM NEWS

WE ARE READY - The 1948 Agricultural Conservation Program is under way. County and community agricultural committeemen are now ready to assist farmers to take full advantage of the program. It's time for farmers to line up the conservation practices to be carried out during 1948, says _____, Chairman of the _____County Agricultural Conservation Committee.

The launching of the 1948 ACProgram is of significant importance to the folks who live in town as well as the farmers of _____ county, says _____. In the first place the production from the farms in _____county furnishes a substantial part of the wealth of the county. The sale of farm products accounts for much of the money to pay for gasoline, machinery, groceries, furniture, clothes, etc. This means more business for the merchants and dealers in the county.

Of even more importance, the Chairman points out, is the fact that all people depend on the soil for most of their food and clothing.

For these reasons everyone has a direct interest in the 1948 Agricultural Conservation Program, since the primary purpose of this program is to conserve and protect the soil.

Under the 1948 ACProgram, farmers of _____ county will be cooperating with the folks who don't live on the farm in a program to help assure continued abundant production of food. "This program," the Chairman explains, "will help keep the grocery shelves filled. It will help fill the ships with food for the hungry people overseas. It will help to make possible the abundant production we need at this time and assure continued abundance for future."

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MACHINES MEAN FEWER FARMS IN SOUTH, SAYS ANDERSON - Mechanization can reduce the man-hours required for producing a bale of cotton to about a fifth of the old requirements with one-row equipment and hand methods, Secretary of Agriculture

Clinton P. Anderson recently told an audience at Tuskegee Institute. And, in the South, mechanization will eventually make for larger and fewer farms.

To the question, "How can I adjust my farming program to mechanization," the Secretary said, there is no simple, over-all answer. "Some small farmers will shift from cotton to other crops. Some will seek part-time off-farm employment. Others may leave the farm altogether for industrial jobs. Probably the largest number will bring in machines and adapt them to their particular needs....

"But I am convinced that out of the difficulties which the new machine age will create, there can emerge a new South, more efficient, more prosperous, more secure in health and happiness. Fewer people will be seeking to wrest a living from too few acres. More will be employed by industry, for the coming of machines is sure to mean an industrial expansion in your cities. The South will have a better balance between farm and city....

"While I understand that many people in the South fear the coming of the machine, I am convinced that we neither can, nor should, hold back the use of machines that free humanity from the drudgery of inefficient, costly hand-methods."

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STOP FLOODS BEFORE THEY START - Floods start where two raindrops get together. And that is the place to start efforts for effective flood control program, says C. V. Hemphill, Chairman of the New Mexico PMA Committee. "Of course when we've failed to do the things we should do and have done the things we shouldn't have done, we have to resort to the more drastic measures down the river after much of the real damage has already been done," the State Chairman said.

Raindrops falling on unprotected land breaks up and loosens the top soil particles, the chairman points out. Then as two or more raindrops get together they start carrying the soil particles away. As more and more are added — each with a bit of soil, a trickle of muddy water starts to form. Trickles run together. A little stream is formed. The stream — carrying the accumulated

soil with it -- picks its way across the land toward the lower levels. Other streams are added. More soil moves from the fields into the river.

In the movements across fields channels are cut and more and more topsoil is carried off. Often the way is made easy by drill furrows or cultivation rows which go up and down the slope of the land instead of across it.

A check of the soil after a rain often reveals what has happened. Small objects like a leaf or stone or a plant keep the raindrops from direct hits on the soil and may be found an inch or more above the surrounding area.

Vegetation checks the force of raindrops, and keeps them from getting together to form soil-carrying, land-destroying and property-destroying floods. Tests show that as much as 50 tons of soil per acre are lost during periods of heavy rain when the land is in row crops, compared with less than a ton when the land is in grass and legumes.

This indicates, according to the chairman, that the place to do the most effective and least expensive flood control is up where the floods start, not down the river after the damage has been done.

He explains that the conservation practices which farmers are carrying out under the Agricultural Conservation Program are among the most effective flood control measures. The trouble is, there still isn't enough of this work being done.

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WEEKLY FARM PROGRAM NEWS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 1949 ACP .. It's about time to be thinking of plans for the 1949 Agricultural Conservation Program, _____, Chairman of the _____ County Agricultural Conservation Committee, advises farmers this week. He said that within the next few weeks the county committee will be asked for recommendations for the 1949 program.

These recommendations, he explains, are sent in to the State PMA Office where the State PMA Committee and the State Technical Committee go over them before transmittal to the national PMA office in Washington, D. C. From these recommendations, and within funds authorized by Congress, the 1949 program will be made up.

Of course, the county chairman said, the recommendations must conform to the law under which the program operates — basically to conserve soil or water. The primary purpose of the program is to check the waste of land and water and to make farmland, pastures and rangeland more productive.

The chairman explains that there is only so much money to be used to assist farmers in carrying out conservation practices. The national, State, county, and community people who administer the program have an obligation to use these funds to get the most conservation possible for each dollar spent. Some practices, which are good conservation practices, are no longer on the list because they are not as urgent as other practices or have not been adopted generally by farmers.

Every farmer has a right and an obligation to help make the best program possible, Mr. _____ says. He urges all farmers to give thought to what they want in the 1949 Agricultural Conservation Program, and to talk over their ideas with their community or county Agricultural Conservation committeemen.

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FARMERS URGED TO MOVE SCRAP - Another call for scrap iron and steel is going out to farmers.

The current short supply of scrap and the outlook for this winter seriously threaten the maintenance of maximum steel production. Yet such maximum production is essential to curb inflation and to support the foreign aid program as well as the domestic economy. Farmers are urged to carry out a determined and thorough search for undiscovered scrap and for obsolete equipment and to move it promptly into market channels.

No matter how small the amount of scrap on any one farm, the total of small lots from many farms will make a worthwhile contribution. Every ton of additional scrap counts in the present situation.

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PERMANENCY AND CONSERVATION - The farm home and the farm land are closely tied together when it comes to this matter of conservation of the soil and water, said _____, Chairman of the _____County Agricultural Conservation Committee, in commenting on the values of programs and projects to improve farm homes.

When the farm family begins to fix up and clean up around the farmstead it's usually an indication they intend to stay and make the farm their home. And now that electricity is making it possible for farm families to have refrigerators, deep freezers, electric stoves, radios and other conveniences which have been considered available only to their city cousins, there is a greater desire to make a home on the farm. Farm women can have some of the conveniences they've wanted for a long time.

The chairman believes that the bringing of electricity to the farm along with the conveniences that go with it lends itself to greater permanency on the farm. Stability of farm occupancy makes possible the crop rotations and other practices which aid present and future production on the farm.

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AIRFIELD DUST CONTROLLED BY STRAW - At some of the desert airfields during the war there was difficulty in controlling the dust. Often it was too dry to grow grass and materials to pave the fields were not available.

The dry farming method of straw mulching was tried. The field was broken up to a depth of about six inches. About two tons of straw per acre were spread on the broken ground and this cut up with a big disc, with discs at least 23 inches in diameter and set straight.

The method worked as well for the air field operators as it does for farmers who have to "anchor" their summer fallow in the agricultural conservation program. The benefits showed up in the operating life of airplane engines. Before the control of the dust the average flying time between engine changes was 397 hours. After the dust was controlled, the average flying time was 523 hours. The old straw mulch dust control method proved completely effective even in 50 mile winds.

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U. S. POTATOES GO TO HELP FEED EUROPE - Efforts to find ways and means of shipping potatoes to Europe without heavy loss have been reasonably successful and arrangements have been completed for the shipment of approximately 3,495,000 bushels of potatoes to Italy, France, and American-English sections of Germany, according to C. V. Hemphill, Chairman of the New Mexico PMA Committee.

Five cargoes of potatoes of about 1,165,000 bushels will go to Italy immediately and a similar amount is to be shipped to Italy not later than March 1. The shipment to Germany of another 1,165,000 bushels will be made in the near future.

Mr. Hemphill said that previous attempts to ship potatoes have not been too successful. In some cases potatoes have begun spoiling before the ships were fully loaded. Suitable ships have not always been available and sometimes transportation has not been adequate after arrival in Europe. Reports indicate that these obstacles have been pretty well eliminated and potatoes can be shipped

fairly successfully to some European countries.

The potatoes will be taken largely from Eastern ports, principally from Maine. This movement, the Chairman explains, will tend to reduce losses of potatoes in storage in this country by taking care of the surplus in heavy producing areas. At the same time it will be supplying urgently needed food to hungry people in Europe.

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ROTARY SUBSOILER HELPS CONSERVE MOISTURE - Farmers in the State of Washington have invented another conservation machine. This one is to help conserve moisture.

When rainfall amounts to only 11 inches a year, as it does in the vicinity of Waterville, the conservation of every drop is of first importance. Even when all of the 11 inches is accumulated for two years by using summer fallow, the moisture available for crop production is still limited.

As explained by _____, Chairman of the _____ County ACP Committee, this is what happens three years out of every four. In the fall the soils freeze. Snows come in winter. In the spring when the snow melts the water flows down hill over the thawing soil, carrying with it some of the topsoil. Even when the soil thaws out, it doesn't absorb moisture as well as it might because the soil is "tight" just below plow depth.

Now, according to the chairman, a machine has been developed to make the land rough and break the tight under layer. The machine looks like a row of solid iron wheels about the diameter of a heavy disk all rolling on one axle. Projecting from the edge of each of these solid wheels are curved fins that penetrate the soil below the tight layer and turn up the soil chunks.

Soil moisture checks indicate that the machine does have possibilities. On soil left in stubble moisture penetrated to a depth varying from 15 to 36 inches. When the machine was used moisture reached a depth of 40 to 60 inches.

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WEEKLY FARM PROGRAM NEWS

OUR COUNTY AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION OFFICE - A farmer behind a desk instead of in front of it is not as uncommon now as it used to be. A good example of this change is the County Agricultural Conservation office.

The (county) county office is located at _____. The men in charge are the farmer-committeemen elected by farmers last fall and winter. Elections were held in all the farm communities or townships in the county to name community committeemen and delegates to a county convention. The three farmers who administer the county agricultural conservation program were elected by the delegates.

These county committeemen run their own farms and usually are at the county office only long enough to do their required administrative work. They are paid only for the time actually spent in this work and do not draw a regular salary.

Other members of the committee are _____, vice chairman and _____, member.

Since the committee is not in the office all the time, _____ is in charge of office operations. (List other employees if desired.)

A major portion of the job of the county committee is administering the Agricultural Conservation Program. This starts with suggestions for the program a year ahead. The committee soon will be sending in recommendations for the 1949 program and farmers now are being invited to give their ideas to community committeemen or send them to the county office.

A major responsibility at this time of the year is meeting with farmers, explaining program practices and agreeing on conservation plans for the year. In this way farmers get the details on how practices must be carried out and the help available. To qualify for assistance the farmer is obliged to carry out conservation practices as specified. Checks are made to see that practices are carried out to assure the desired conservation results.

Other programs administered by the county ACP office are crop loans and other price support measures, the sugar program, and other work as assigned.

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A HALF-SACK OF FERTILIZER - "Is your future security in the land worth a half-sack of fertilizer?" asks _____, chairman of the _____ county agricultural conservation committee. He points out that this is about what it costs per person to protect the Nation's cropland from erosion and depletion through the Agricultural Conservation Program.

Here's the way the chairman breaks down the cost of the program in simple terms. Actually, he says, the cost for 1948 is even less than a half-sack of fertilizer. Funds available for the program if divided equally among the 145 million people in the country would come to just a little over a dollar apiece. That would hardly buy more than a fourth of a sack of 4-9-5 or 5-10-6 commercial fertilizer.

The nation's cropland if divided equally among the people in the country comes out about 3¼ acres per person. If the harvested cropland is taken — and that's the land from which the food comes — the figure is about 2½ acres per person. From that 2½ acres comes wheat, corn, cotton and other fibers, much of the meat, milk, eggs, leather, and other products necessary for life, health and comfort.

The Agricultural Conservation Program, the chairman explains, is the cooperative means by which each individual shares in helping the farmers who till the soil to conserve each person's 2½ acres so that it will keep on producing abundantly. It's a program to help stop the loss of 500,000 acres of land which are being lost each year through erosion. To carry out the conservation practices under the program, the farmer himself puts up about half the cost and all the work. The rest of the people in the country each contribute a little more than a dollar each to insure that his 2½ acres will keep on producing.

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INCREASED FARM MECHANIZATION ECONOMICALLY SOUND, SAYS USDA - Increased mechanization is an integral part of a long-range policy of organized, sustained, and realistic abundance, Fred Northrup, Director of the Price Support and Foreign Supply Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, recently told the Agriculture Committee of the House of Representatives.

With proper planning, increasing mechanization can further strengthen the competitive position of the family farm — adding to the economic strength of our agriculture, making farm labor more productive, and decreasing the drudgery of farming.

While lack of farm machinery in 1947 did not seriously affect food production, Mr. Northrup said that State reports clearly show that the supply of many items does not meet the demands of farmers. In some areas, principally the South and Southeast, additional land might have been cropped had more machinery and equipment been available.

In shortest supply are tractors and mechanized equipment such as hay balers, combines, corn pickers, plows and mowers, grain drills, side delivery rakes, and manure spreaders. More nearly meeting demand are supplies of dairy equipment, horse-drawn equipment, feed grinders, garden tractors, and wagons.

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POTATO PROBLEMS NOT YET SOLVED - Dealers as well as growers have a responsibility to bring production and marketing problems to public attention so that all may work together to overcome them, said S. R. Smith, Director of the Production and Marketing Administration's Fruit and Vegetable Branch, in a recent talk to fruit and vegetable trade representatives.

He explained that, because of great variation in keeping qualities, extreme fluctuations in yields and the fact that potatoes are about 80 percent water, the problems are especially difficult. Since potatoes bruise easily and are perishable, the market range and shipping possibilities are definitely limited.

Referring to some of the problems, Mr. Smith explained that acreage goals for potatoes can be based only on past average yields. Yet, a slight swing in weather can have a major effect upon yield per acre, entirely out of line with average yields. Recent improvements in insect and disease control methods have tended to increase yields.

On the ground that it is better to have too much than too little, the tendency in setting up potato acreage goals each year is to set the goals a little too high rather than too low, the director explained. This tends to aggravate surplus troubles in years of high yields.

Early and intermediate potatoes, he stated, do not store as well as late potatoes. Therefore, when there is a big crop the market will not take all of the early and intermediate kinds before the late potatoes come on to the market.

Despite the difficulties potato losses have been held to a minimum in recent years, Director Smith stated. In past years abandonment of potato acreage and the feeding of potatoes to livestock to get rid of them were not uncommon. In 1934 more than 160,000 acres were abandoned and more than 40 million bushels were fed to livestock due to a combination of bad weather and low price. In 1946, with 476 million bushels, the biggest crop on record, the Government purchased 98½ million bushels and lost about one-fourth of them. Up to December 1 last year with another big crop the Government purchased less than 20 million bushels and lost about ½ million bushels.

The Director appeals to shippers, processors and dealers for all possible help in explaining the problems to consumers and for assistance in overcoming the difficulties.

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'WAR'S END' COMES FIRST TO TOBACCO FARMERS - Tobacco growers have a chance, before most other farmers, to start their conversion to peacetime production. And it's a wise tobacco grower who will use this opportunity to work out a more diversified and balanced system of farming on his land.

The home market is important to tobacco growers; domestic consumption of flue-cured has trebled within the past 20 years, use of burley has about doubled. But normally, only 50 to 60 percent of the total flue-cured production is used at home; during the past score of years, about 45 percent has been exported, with Europe and China traditionally good customers.

Because of the importance of world trade, and the fact that wartime drains on the economy of many foreign countries has all but closed them as stable and dependable outlets for much of this Nation's tobacco production, U. S. tobacco growers have even cause to use a more complete and well-rounded program than other farmers. The tobacco program of the Department of Agriculture includes acreage allotments and marketing quotas, price-support loans, research and experimental activities, and inspection and market news services.

Added to all these, is an increasing awareness, in the tobacco country, of the importance of soil-conserving practices. This is apparent in the increased amounts of lime and fertilizer used in connection with grasses and legumes, and in the amounts of contouring, strip cropping, and other wise farming practices carried out in that area under the Agricultural Conservation Program.

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